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The Family Dishes

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INSIDE OUR HOME

- | | | | |
|-----------|---|-----------|--|
| 6 | Our Reader Panel
Volunteer fans of HOME magazine. | 38 | City Park Revival
Restoring a century-old home. |
| 10 | Men Who Paint
Unconventional name, universal appeal. | 44 | Accommodating Moving Ground
A reno ready for sinking soil. |
| 16 | Little Hacienda on the Prairies
Rich with baroque flourish and Spanish flair. | 50 | HOME Food
Pulse tacos. |
| 25 | The Family Dishes
Will china dinnerware make a comeback? | 54 | HOMEtown Reflections
Evolution of the floor plan. |
| 31 | Laneway Living in North Park
Saskatoon's first garage suite. | 60 | A Rink In Your Basement
The ultimate hockey fan feature. |



Men Who Paint
10

Photo: Ken Van Rees

Cover: Meet the Saskatoon couple who put the 'sweet' in Saskatoon's first garage suite. Photo: Appl Photo

HOME Front



Hat from Saskatoon's own
Sova Design Millinery.

Photo of Amanda Soulodre by Paul McTavish

Ahhh, Autumn! Here at Saskatoon HOME, it's our favourite time of year. Right up there with our other favourites: Spring, Summer and Winter. Saskatoon shines no matter what season you're in. We look forward to sharing with you all the gems that make our city so special. Just a few highlights inside:

Meet Saskatoon's own MenWho Paint, a talented Group of Five artists, and see why what they love to capture on canvas is getting international attention (pg. 10).

Extraordinary measures are worth it to Gerard and Jacquie Gardiner, who built their home on a flood plain, mere metres from the South Saskatchewan River. See what unusual steps they've taken to build a house that will accommodate Mother Nature's whims (pg. 44).

Before your siesta this afternoon, visit one of Saskatoon's "little haciendas on the prairies," a Spanish-influenced home in one of our oldest neighbourhoods. It's current owner saved this unique 85-year-old home from potential destruction (pg. 16). Another homeowner carefully renovated her City Park home and insisted on retaining vintage architectural features while modernizing amenities (pg. 38).

Meet a North Park couple who are breathing new life into a back alley, turning the notion of curb appeal on

its ear (pg. 31). And talk about a twist on the old rumpus room; have a look at a home with its very own hockey rink—in the basement (pg. 60).

HOMEfoodie Craig Silliphant takes the pulse of an important crop and gives use some tasty recipes to try (pg. 50). What to serve them on? How about some beautiful English bone china? Chat with antique dealer Don Penn, and have a peek at Roger Valliere's stunning collection. Remember: pinkies up! (pg. 25)

Speaking of bones, historian Jeff O'Brien shows us how home interiors have evolved. Do you know how the term "living room" came to be? You will! (pg. 54)

Enjoy the stories in our fall issue, and we'll see you again when the snow flies.

Until then, happy reading.

AMANDA SOULODRE
OWNER & PUBLISHER

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HOME

SASKATOON

Issue 35, Fall 2016

ISSN 1916-2324

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Saskatoon HOME is published by:
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www.saskatoon-home.ca

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communications

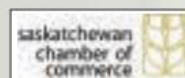
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READER PANEL

Thank you to our Fall Issue Reader Panel seen below. The people on the Reader Panel change every issue and are made up of fans of the magazine who volunteer to help us select our stories. Their input allows us to really delve into our readership and make sure we are selecting stories that people in and around Saskatoon look forward to reading each and every issue. Once story ideas are selected, we then assign them to our talented writers.



“The next room in our home we plan to renovate is our unfinished basement. We finished our yard this year!

Candice Hayes

Financial Planner,
RBC



“I love reading HOME because it's not a pretentious magazine and I can identify with the content.

Carol Kavanagh

Retired Psychologist,
Writer and Poet



“The stories I love to read in HOME are about the history of neighbourhoods in our city, stories about renos and new homes—in that order.

Chantelle Butterfield

Owner,
Funktional Space Interior Decorating



“I love reading HOME because I recognize the places and people, and it's local.

Dean Dodge

Chief Executive Officer,
YMCA of Saskatoon



“I love that the content of Saskatoon HOME is local and relevant to the city I live in.

Lola Poncelet

Owner,
Ninth Street B & B



“I volunteered to be on HOME's Reader Panel because I enjoy the magazine and want to contribute to its ongoing success.

Wes Fyck

Partner/Creative Director,
National Brand Communications

Interested in being on a future panel? Email: amanda@saskatoon-home.ca with 'Reader Panel' in the subject line.

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MEN WHO PAINT

Unconventional Name, Universal Appeal



 **ASHLEIGH MATTERN**

Photo: Cam Forrester

Greg Hargarten admits that the artist group he's involved with has a slightly unusual name.

"It's maybe a bit sexist or cheeky," Greg says. "Paul [Trottier] came up with the name as a bit of a joke."

The Men Who Paint group is made up of Greg, Paul, Roger Trottier, Cam Forrester and Ken

Van Rees. They met through the Emma Lake Kenderdine Campus, a setting that inspired their art, as well as their name.

"We would go up to the Kenderdine campus, and being the only men there with all these other females, we sort of stood out," Greg explains. "A lot of years, we would be

the only males there, which is another reason we ended up hanging out together in the beginning."

Despite the irreverent origins of the name, Men Who Paint have made themselves known for creating high quality plein air paintings of gorgeous Canadian landscapes.

Moved by Landscapes

Inspired by the likes of Tom Thomson and the Group of Seven, their paintings are alive with the movement and colour of Canadian landscapes captured on scene in places like Banff National Park, Ontario's Algonquin Park, Ellesmere Island, Yukon's Ivvavik National



Photo: Ken Van Rees



Photo: Ken Van Rees



Photo: Greg Hargarten

Park, Prince Albert National Park, Emma Lake, La Ronge and Cypress Hills.

"You can take a million pictures out there, but it never seems to capture all the colours," Greg says. "Painting, you really capture the essence of the place, more so than a photograph."

They've been painting together for almost 10 years now. When they met, Paul was the director at the Kenderdine campus, Greg had started to take classes there and Ken, a professor of soil science at University of Saskatchewan, had brought his soil studies students to the campus ➤

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Cam Forrester—'San Jacinto Fog'



Roger Trotter—'Fall Flow Pools'

to do field work.

Ken in particular had no interest in art before visiting the Kenderdine campus and seeing the artwork being created there.

"It hit a nerve with him, and he started taking a class. 'Art

for the completely intimidated' or something like that, and he found that it really spoke to him," Greg says.

Down to Earth

More recently, Ken found a way to merge his work as

a soil scientist with his art. Partnering with an art professor at the University of Saskatchewan, they worked out how they could use different types of soils to create paint.

To create the soil paint, they collect materials such as soil,

sand, bone and antler from the places they've visited, and then grind it up into a fine dust, which is mixed with a binding agent like egg tempera or an acrylic medium, creating a completely natural colour.

They then use the soil paint

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Paul Trotter—'Storm Stubble'



Greg Hargarten—'Spruce River Ice Shelf'

to create images of the places the soil came from, essentially painting the landscapes with the landscape.

In December 2015, they did a show of the work they'd created with the soil paints, and Greg said seeing all

of their work together was "amazing."

"There was a consistency of colour. No blue because there's no blue soil, no green because there's no green soil. It was probably one of the shows that we've done that had the most

consistency. It looked really good together because there is a limited palette."

Their next show is in Saskatoon on Oct. 21–22 at The Willows Golf & Country Club, and they're in the process of organizing a touring show

through the Canada Arts Council.

International Interest

The videos and short films they've made of their work and expeditions has also given them an international audience. ➤

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Photo: Greg Hargarten



Ken Van Rees—'Homecoming'

They're currently booked to do a "landscapes with landscape" show in Germany in 2018. The group will travel to Germany to collect materials and make paintings of the landscape, along with a group of German painters, and have a show together of the work they create.

"People write to us from Europe, all over Canada and even Scandinavian countries," Greg says.

The art may be Canadian, and the artists from Saskatoon, but the images have a timeless appeal that anyone can understand. (H)

Ashleigh Mattern

THE MEN WHO PAINT



Greg Hargarten

Greg Hargarten is a Saskatoon based painter, musician and graphic artist. He rediscovered his love of painting after a stay the U of S Kenderdine

Campus at Emma Lake in 2004. He paints a variety of subject matter, but is mostly recognized for his urban and traditional landscapes.



Cam Forrester

Cam is the Executive Director of Riverside Country Club in Saskatoon. Being outdoors sketching and painting Northern Saskatchewan landscapes is a particular love. His paintings are either completed on site, or larger paintings are created in his studio from the studies done in the field.



Paul Trottier

Paul is the former Director of the Emma Lake Kenderdine Campus and now owns Hues Art Supply in

Saskatoon. Art has always been a part of his life, specializing in Arts education and printmaking while at University; it was not until 2004 that he began to paint.



Roger Trottier

Roger teaches part time for the University of Saskatchewan Certificate in the Art and Design program teaching visual art survey and illustrating. He devotes his free time to studying, sketching, photographing and painting Saskatchewan landscapes.



Ken Van Rees

Ken is a native of Ontario and is department head in the Soil Science Department, University of Saskatchewan. He started incorporating art into his science field courses in 2004 after spending time at the Emma Lake Kenderdine Campus.

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LITTLE HACIENDA ON THE PRAIRIES

Rich with Baroque Flourish and Spanish Flair



At first, Meg Gerwing didn't think of it as a rescue mission when she set her sights on a unique little 1930-built house in Nutana. She was living in a large home down the street, just looking to make her life a little smaller. She knew the unusual house was sitting empty and she watched it languish for five

years, tangled up in the estate of the late Mary Spinks. Mary and Dr. J.W.T. Spinks, Univer-

sity of Saskatchewan president 1960–75, had lived in the house for over two decades.

Originally built for \$7,000 in 1930, it was inspired by California Spanish Revival style architecture, popular in 1920s Hollywood.

Throwing a Lifeline

While the Spinkses had no children, there were distant relatives and Meg worried they would stop the sale at the 11th hour. She held her breath; she knew there were developers keen to have the property. The house is only 1100 sq. ft. but it sits on a 60-foot double lot.



KARIN MELBERG SCHWIER



HEATHER FRITZ

Meg worried the house would simply be torn down and the property subdivided for two new builds. Often described as a “little hacienda on the prairies,” the house finally cleared probate. In 2004, Meg threw her lifeline and reeled the house in.

Spanish Revival All the Rage

Walter English, who owned a roofing and sheet metal company, built the house in 1930. Builders A.W. Cassidy worked with architects Webster Gilbert, who created many notable Spanish-inspired structures in Saskatoon like the Capitol Theatre, ➤



CONTOUR

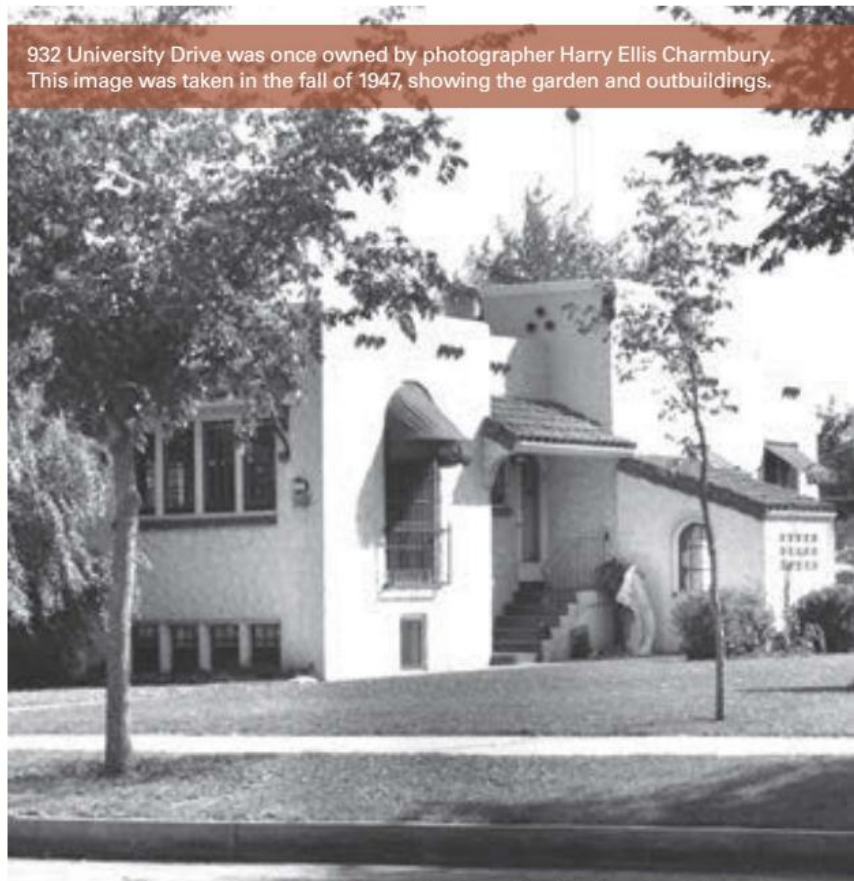
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932 University Drive was once owned by photographer Harry Ellis Charmbury. This image was taken in the fall of 1947, showing the garden and outbuildings.

Photo: Local History Room – Saskatoon Public Library, Harry Ellis Charmbury - PH-97-72-6

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LIST OF OCCUPANTS (listed in Henderson's Directories)

1932–47: Mr. and Mrs. Walter J. English, manager W.J. English and Co. English Crescent in the North Industrial area is named for Walter English.

During WWII years: Dr. Wilburn D. McPhail, physician; Mrs. Doris E. Sharp, no occupation, and Harry Sharp, in Active Service. Perhaps the Englishes rented the basement rooms during the war years.

1948–1976: Harry and Florence Charmbury, owner/photographer, Charmbury's Studio Ltd. She was later active in heritage issues and honoured by the Saskatoon Heritage Society; she passed away in 2014.

1976–1999: Dr. J.W.T. and Mary Spinks, and held by their estate until 2004. Dr. Spinks was President of the University from 1960–75, an internationally known professor and researcher. He was named a member of the Order of the British Empire, and a Companion of the Order of Canada, among other honours. He received an Honourary Doctor of Laws degree from the University in 1990. The Spinks Addition Building and the J.W.T. Spinks Lecture Series are named in his honour.

2004–present: Meg Gerwing, retired registered nurse and business owner.

Campbell's/Park Funeral Chapel, the Tivoli Theatre and others, now gone. Some Webster Gilbert projects remain: Earl's Restaurant (McGavin's Bakery), the Little Chief police station, the Roxy

cinema interior and Cambridge Court Apartments.

Built to Suit

Mrs. English was one of the original Canadian snowbirds and loved California Spanish

Revival style architecture, popular in 1920s Hollywood. Walter English had the house built—for \$7,000—“to please her.” They lived in the house until 1948 when it was bought by Harry and Florence ➤

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Charmbury. He was the son of pioneering photographer T.H.J. Charmbury and founder of the local photography business. Dr. John William Tranter (J.W.T.) Spinks and his wife Mary bought in 1976.

"Dr. Spinks died in 1997 and Mary in 1999, and while it sat in probate, there was a flood in the basement. It was pretty grim, but I was prepared. One of my missions in life is to restore unique old buildings.

Nothing had been changed in the house, so hardwood floors, light fixtures and wall sconces were all original so that was a real gift," says Meg. She rolled up her sleeves and started with the wiring, roof repairs, plumbing, replacing the old boiler furnace and took on all the painting herself.

History Preserved

"Not much had been changed since 1930, which was wonderful. The walls are rough textured, but were really grotty when I moved in. They had been painted at one time, but I don't think they'd been cleaned in 30 years. So that was my first job," she says.

She uncovered some unusual décor choices. "As I took off original switch plates, I could see that at one time

the entire room had been a horrible liver colour. It was really unusual, a brownish purple shade."

A set of French doors leading from the dining room to living room had been removed and stored in the basement. "They were painted that putrid colour, too, but luckily they had kept them. That was a great gift, too, despite the colour," Meg laughs.

Another gift that came with the house was a living treasure. "I met Mrs. Charmbury a few years ago at a local heritage event," recalls Meg. "She was a sweet old girl, a lovely woman. She had one son, Owen, who is the same age as me. It's odd, but my insurance agent, Bruce Pendleton, went to school with him so he and Owen used to play together



The stone retaining wall was built to last and creates a 'secret garden' feel to the back yard.



PRESERVING HOMES, HONOURING HISTORY

"In recent years, residents in historic neighbourhoods such as Nutana have been witness to a surge in demolition of heritage homes. What a pleasure it is, therefore, when we see owners like Meg, who are bucking this trend, who see the beauty and history embedded in our older homes and are willing to put time, energy and cash into restoring them. Meg has also taken the extra step of protecting her home from future development by agreeing to its designation as a Municipal Heritage Property. There are other owners like Meg, who

have also lovingly restored their homes. We need to celebrate these people. Without their efforts, we would lose even more of our historic streetscapes. But it's not just about our physical environment. When a house is demolished, the stories of the people who lived there often disappear too and it's these people—notable and not so notable—who provide the foundation on which our city is built. Let's be careful about knocking down our buildings and say thank you to those who choose not to."
— Peggy Sarjeant, Saskatoon Heritage Society

in my house as little boys! If you've lived in Nutana for 40 years, you know everybody! Your paths will cross at some point." Meg laughs. History is relative.

"I told Mrs. Charmbury that I was living in the 932 house now. She remembered a big

weeping birch in front lawn that eventually died away. Since then, I've toyed with the idea of putting another one as homage to her."

Honouring the Past

Aside from bits of historical knowledge about ➤

The whitewashed stucco, roof tiles and baroque flourishes add to the Spanish flair.





Many of the original 1930s elements were still in original condition, "a real gift," Meg says.



the house, Meg has literally unearthed other things. Digging in the terraced yard, built with "a stone retaining wall built to last," she's found a WWII lead soldier, antique marbles and pieces of crockery, each one a prized discovery.

"I like to think I saved the house from the wrecking ball," she says. "I haven't changed a thing structurally. My thing is to restore, not renovate. It's just such a special little house that I knew it needed to be preserved."

In 2013, Meg's application to the City was successful

and the house and land were designated a Municipal Heritage Property.

"I'm a stickler for heritage and maintaining the original intent," she explains. "I am honoured to be the steward of the little hacienda's rich history. Everything I do to restore and maintain the place is a labour of love. Walter English had it built to please his wife and 86 years later, it's just perfect for me." (i)

Karin Melberg Schwier

"My purpose in life is not so much to renovate, but to restore," says current owner Meg Gerwing.



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  **KARIN MELBERG SCHWIER**

THE FAMILY DISHES

Will China Dinnerware Make a Comeback?

Queen Elizabeth II turned 90 this year and gave herself a pretty little something for the occasion.

Buckingham Palace commissioned a commemorative set of bone china, a delicate design of light blue hand-painted with 22-carat gold gilding. It was created at a Stoke-on-Trent factory by 50 handpicked artisans chosen for their traditional

expertise. The Royal Arms, with ribbons, bows, garlands of roses, shamrocks, thistles, are national emblems. As a more personal touch, there are April roses and forget-me-nots, and June cornflowers for her actual and official birthdays. Prices range from £25 for a mug to £89 for a plate. Her Majesty is said to be "very pleased" with her birthday

crockery. Safe to say, china is still a big deal in England.

Formal, Not so Much

But what about out here in the Colonies? Have Corelle and Corning replaced Denby and Royal Doulton? Is the future bleak for Beleek? In the modern age of fast food and dishwashers, is the hand washing and care required for

delicate bone and fine china just too much bother? Some antique dealers seem to think so as they've watched prices plummet.

Don Penn (pictured above) of Penn's Antiques says china futures, for now, don't look good.

"Young people just aren't collectors, at least not as much as I'd like," says Don, who's been in the antique busi- ➤

Buckingham Palace commissioned a commemorative set of bone china for Queen Elizabeth II's 90th birthday. It was created by 50 handpicked artisans at the Stoke on Trent factory.



Photos: Royal Collection Trust. © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2016.



ness for 45 years. "I recently had a grandmother in for pieces to complete her set so she could leave it to her granddaughter. I'm almost certain that her granddaughter isn't going to want it." Inheritors bring in collections and ask for a few paltry dollars just to

take it off their hands.

"We're a disposable society now," Don shrugs. "Price is the key." In fact, the output of lower-quality china has increased since factories have opened in China, India, Bangladesh, Romania and other places with a cheap

labour force. "Always look for a Made in England stamp on the bottom," Don warns.

China Enthusiasts Prevail

But one granddaughter's upturned nose is another person's treasure.

When intrepid pioneers

homesteaded on the prairies, sat out their first winters in their soddies and broke land with a horse and plough, most probably weren't laying out their best china to serve their cowboy coffee and gopher stew. Still, a lot of valuable china—complete sets and single pieces—made



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Roger Valliere's collection includes 20 complete sets and thousands of pieces.



their way deep into the heart of Canada. The possibility that pristine pieces are still to be found keeps collectors like Roger Valliere on the hunt.

"My Aunt Elaine had a beautiful little china tea set," remembers Roger. "At the farmhouse, my little sister and I always wanted to play with it, but we were only allowed to look, never touch," he says. "I was just taken with it."

He still scours garage sales, flea markets, tag sales, Kijiji and eBay for mint condition pieces and guesses he has 20 complete sets and thousands of pieces by various china manufacturers.

"I don't collect for the monetary value," says Roger, owner of Solar Gardens. He displays some of his vast collection in the Firestick Café dining hall and patrons can even use it whilst lifting a pinkie during High Tea or when dining at Thanksgiving.

"China is simply beautiful to look at. If you use it, you want pieces still in pristine condition. You don't want to sip from a cup that has been worn down to the clay."

A Mail-Order Province

"Out here on the prairies,

everything from furniture, to dishes to houses from Eaton's, came through the catalogue," Don Penn explains. "Most of the dishes people brought out when they homesteaded, if anything, was probably demolished when the wife bought new stuff. Occasionally full dinner sets will turn up, but very rarely." People ordered through Hudson Bay, Eaton's or Sears and it was shipped.

"The majority of what we find is Royal Albert. It's our bread and butter china in the store," Don says. "It's what everybody got as a wedding present in the 1940s. The better stuff like Royal Doulton and Beleek was in some of the better homes. Wealthier people ordered through Birks."

A Personal Touch

While only very wealthy families were likely to commission china sets with their own family crest or coat of arms, various hotels, restaurants, institutions and other businesses saw the marketing opportunity. Not much different than today's advertising strategies, blanks were produced in a factory, emblazoned with the café name or hotel logo and sent to the customer. ➤



"Always look for a Made in England stamp on the bottom," Don warns.

BONING UP ON CHINA

China is largely made of feldspar, kaolin (clay) and yes, bone china really does have bone ash in it. If it is fired at a high temperature, 1455°C, it becomes more durable porcelain, which also contains clay, granite and silica. A lower temperature, 1200°C, produces fine china, which is softer and more suitable for creating cups and plates. Bone china is more translucent with a warmer colour due to the bone ash. Fine china is made by a similar process, just without the bone ash. The bone? Cows, mostly, but apparently you can commission Charles Krafft, a Seattle artist, to make funerary china—memento mori—with your cremated loved ones. Talk about having someone over for dinner.



"Occasionally you'll see someone's monogram, but that was usually hand-painted on blank pieces and then fired," says Don. "I just threw out some pieces that had some kind of family crest, but they were just single pieces and sat here in the store for years."

A China Comeback?

Will it ever be popular again? "I hope it comes back, but I doubt it," Don shrugs. "An antique dealer in town told me he was buying china from Waddington's, an auction house in Ontario.

He was picking up 17th and 18th century porcelain for a quarter of what he was paying 30 years ago. He's just buying it for himself since he can't sell it. If it can't be thrown into a dishwasher, people just don't want to bother with it."

Don leans on a stack of LP records, and a tower of vintage turntables sits next to a cabinet with a Beleek china display. Still, who ever thought vinyl would have a resurgence?

A Return to Refinement

Just maybe, a younger generation learning to appre-

DOING THE DISHES

Five shatterproof china tips from collector Roger Valliere on display and care:

1. A locked cabinet is always the best choice.
2. Always keep out of reach of children and shaky old people (he says with a laugh). Use plate rails at your own risk!
3. Make sure your shelving is large enough to display the entire set. Pieces are less likely to get lost or broken, and the set remains complete. Far more valuable than one with a missing piece or two.
4. Never have the shelf or display area in full sun. The colours and patterns will fade, just like artwork.
5. Hand-wash with lukewarm water and a mild dishwashing detergent. Rinse in lukewarm water with a small amount of bleach to help keep any cracks or crazing (a network of fine cracks in the glaze) from staining or discolouring. Towel-dry with soft cotton cloths.

ciate the slow food movement and proper dining etiquette will also turn an eye toward formal dinnerware and the gentility it inspires.

Increased popularity might make Roger Valliere's own hunt more difficult and more costly. But he does hope for a china renaissance.

"So many people come in to look at what's on display here and they remember what their great grandmother had.

It's nostalgic, and brings back happy memories of growing up on the farm," he says. "The joy is not just in having it. The joy is the hunt, then making sure people can enjoy it. Everyone feels like a welcome guest when they are offered a meal on a set of beautiful china." (H)

Karin Melberg Schwier

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LANEWAY LIVING IN NORTH PARK

Saskatoon's First Garage Suite



JULIE BARNES



APPL PHOTO

Tucked away behind mature trees and a century-old bungalow on Empress Avenue, you'll find Saskatoon's first garage suite. The modern North Park home sits amid the tree-tops above a two-car garage. It's a light-filled, open-concept space with two bedrooms, two bathrooms and a cozy cedar deck overlooking the back lane.

The owners, Jeff Nattress

and Shannon Bray, broke ground last spring and—together with their dog, Henry (a Shiba Inu), and 29-year-old turtle, Mikey (a red-eared slider)—moved in last December.

Jeff purchased the street-facing bungalow in 2014. Situated on a sizable lot (it's 50' wide x 125' long), the house's small footprint

left the couple with plenty of space to build their new home. Once completed, they made the short move from the bungalow to the garage suite and rented out the main house—a situation Jeff refers to as a suite reversal.

Built-in Benefits

Jeff and Shannon's leafy vantage point is just one of

the many benefits of laneway living.

"For us, it's being able to build good density into an established neighbourhood that's already beautiful and full of trees," says Jeff. "There's already infrastructure here: roads, sidewalks, water and sewer pipes that we're able to tap into and so we get all these benefits of being able to ➤



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DEVELOPMENT



Jeff is putting his new-found expertise into use to help others with their laneway home applications.

live in an established neighbourhood even though it's a new build. It's a type of infill that's not very intrusive—in my opinion—because we didn't have to tear down a house to build this. We just built in the existing space that was here."

They've even become good friends with neighbours across the laneway. "Even more so than the other side of the street," says Jeff. "We look out for each other; we put out their garbage bins when they're not around."

Application Process

Ten weeks after submitting his application, Jeff had his building permit in hand. "There was a lot of going back and forth between myself and the City on what was required. It was sort of the pilot project since day one," Jeff explains.

He now applies that hard-earned knowledge in a professional capacity by consulting homeowners who are aiming to build their own garage or garden suites. Through his company, Laneway ➤





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People are surprised to learn that a laneway house is much more than a garage package with a kitchen.



Jeff and Shannon live in their garage suite and have rented out their main house—Jeff calls it a suite reversal.

Suites, Jeff guides his clients through the application process, and acts as general contractor during the construction stage.

For Jeff, clearing up misconceptions from the outset is vital.

"What people are expecting, a lot of the time, is that it's essentially a garage package with a kitchen in it, and it's quite a bit more extensive than that. I try to tell people it's like building a small house on an unserviced lot, so you've got to factor in things like servicing. It's got to have a stronger foundation than a typical garage would, and it's got to follow all the building code elements of a living space," he says. "It's essentially just a small house and therefore the costs are going to be in line with what it costs to build a home."

Suite Reversal

Jeff's clients tend to view garage and garden suites as an opportunity to move aging family members closer, or to undertake what he has done—the suite reversal. It's a common practice in Vancouver where garage suites were approved in 2009. "They don't need the space in the house anymore, and they'd like a new energy-efficient building to live in," he says of his clients. "Very few people have been looking at them as pure rentals."

A Hidden Fabric

Saskatoon's laneways are brimming with untapped potential for increasing density, growing the housing stock and even improving safety. Jeff explains that laneway homes have "been shown to ➤

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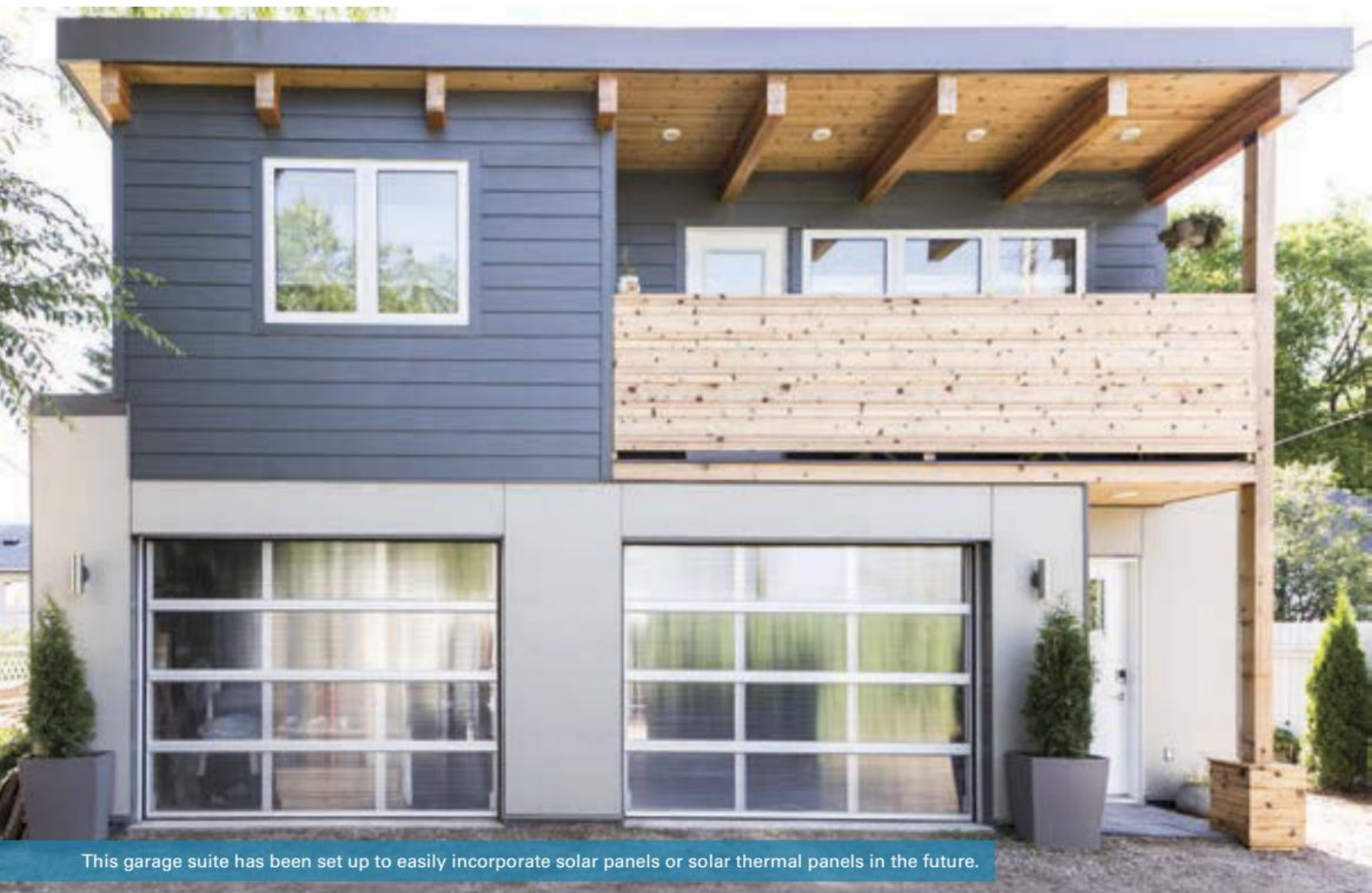


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This garage suite has been set up to easily incorporate solar panels or solar thermal panels in the future.



WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Garden suite, garage suite, laneway house, granny flat, carriage house—there are myriad names for homes that sit behind the principal residence, but for simplicity's sake, here's how the City of Saskatoon defines the two terms it uses: garden and garage suites.

Garden Suite: a small self-contained, ground-oriented dwelling unit that is accessory to a one-unit dwelling. It is located in the rear yard of a one-unit dwelling and has cooking, food preparation, sleeping and sanitary facilities that are separate from those in the one-unit dwelling.

Garage Suite: a building containing both a garden suite and an area used as a private garage and is accessory to a one-unit dwelling. It is located in the rear yard of a one-unit dwelling.

actually improve safety in the lane and bring more energy and an extra hidden fabric to the city essentially."

Crystal Bueckert, an architectural technologist and owner of Bldg Studio, collaborated with Jeff and Shannon on the design of their home. She echoes Jeff's observation about the hidden fabric garage and garden suites instill on our urban landscape when recalling her first impression of the completed home. "I drove down the lane in the

late evening and was struck at how the laneway house lit up the alley and created a quiet, hidden streetscape," she says. "The spacious, open-concept living area, the ceiling heights and the feature glulam beams have created a warm place for Jeff and Shannon to call home." 

Julie Barnes



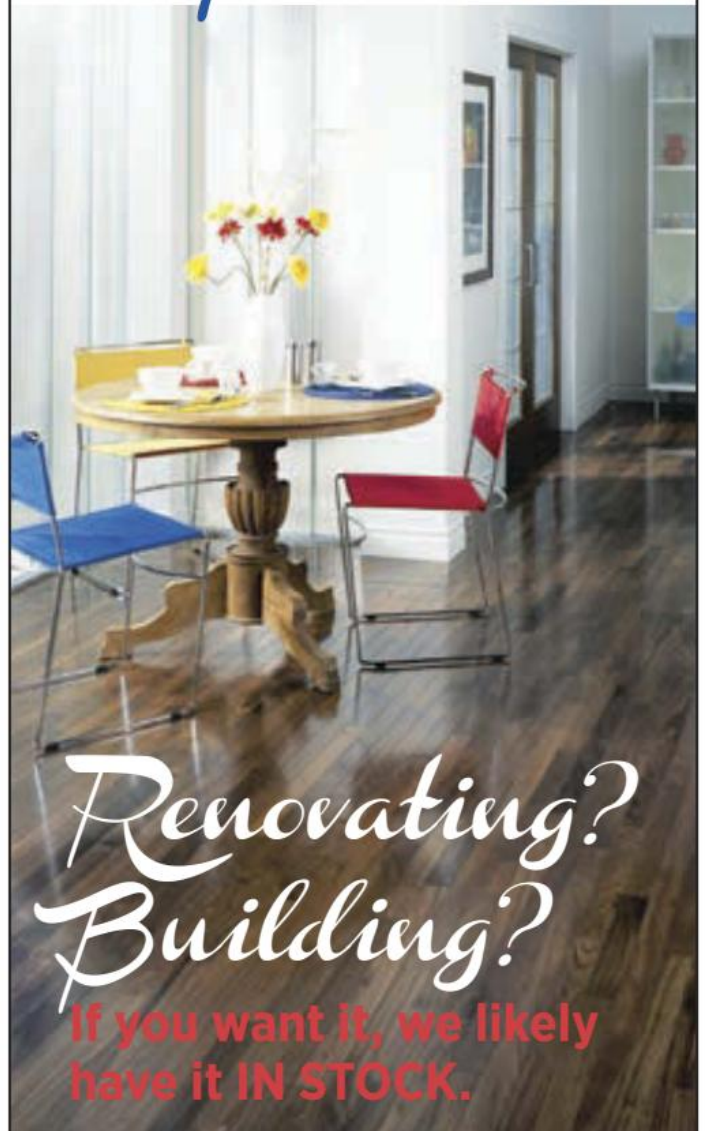
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CITY PARK REVIVAL

Restoring a Century-Old Home

There aren't many streetscapes in Saskatoon's core neighbourhoods that have completely retained their original character, but the 800 block of City Park's 6th Avenue comes pretty close. Many of the two- and three-storey character homes lining the street

are graced with generous sun porches or verandahs and gabled roofs that testify to cozy attic rooms inside.

Michelle Fehr snapped one such house up last fall. Although it was in need of a major overhaul, Michelle was intent on keeping the original

character inside and out. She envisioned a bright, airy space with contemporary conveniences and an open-concept main floor. Her ultimate goal? To breathe new life into the charming home—without breaking the bank.

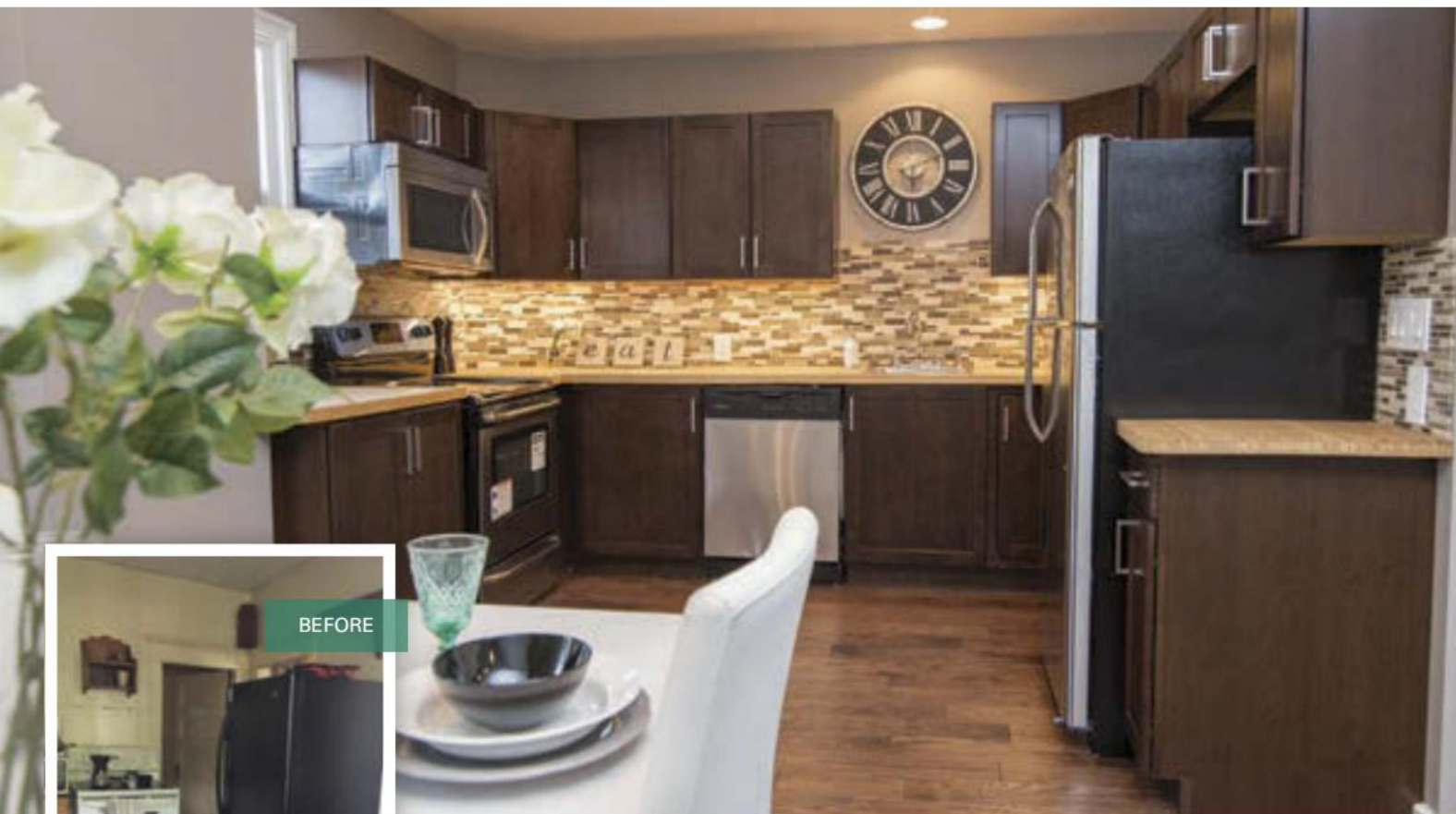
Making it Modern

Built in 1912, it came as no surprise to Michelle that the home's electrical work and plumbing needed to be replaced to bring it up to code. She hired Steve McMorrow, owner of McMorrow Construction, as the ➤

Owner Michelle wanted to maintain the vintage character and warmth while she upgraded her home.



BEFORE



BEFORE

general contractor, as well as a plumber and electrician recommended by Steve. Old knob-and-tube wiring was replaced, a new electrical panel was installed and the interior plumbing was updated.

"We opened up the main floor, removed walls and

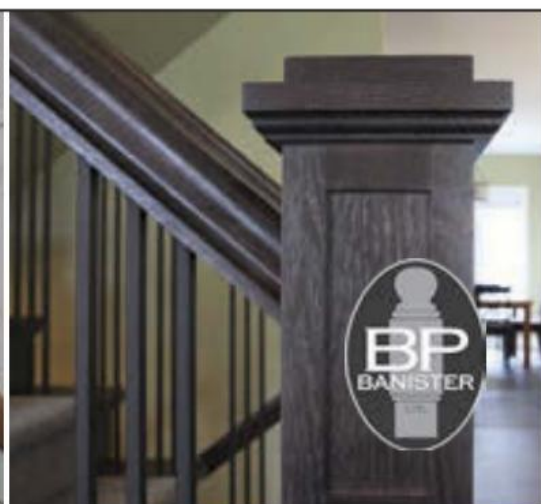
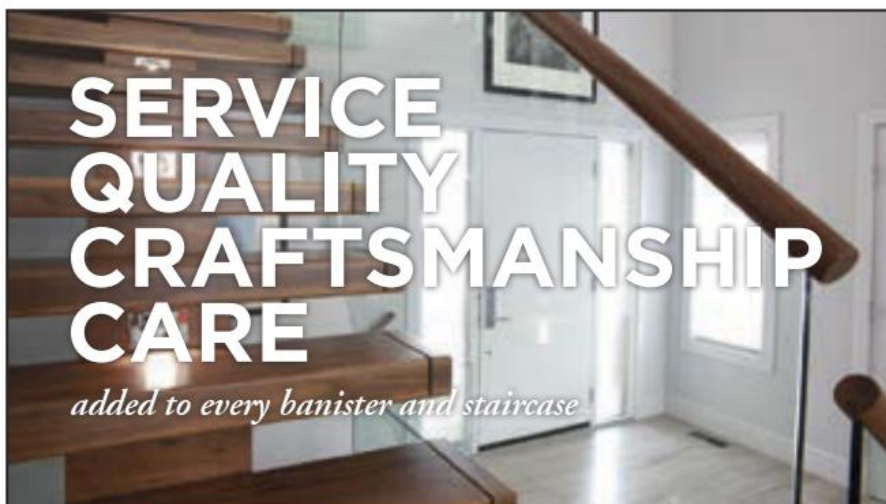
put recessed beams in and opened up the kitchen. That was all planned by Michelle," says Steve. A back door was relocated to improve flow and a new kitchen was installed. New hardwood floors were laid on the main floor, while upstairs the original hardwood

was sanded and stained by McMorrow. Then Michelle tackled the finish.

The two bathrooms were fully renovated (heated floors were added in the ensuite), drywall was replaced throughout the home, the basement acquired new spray-foam

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insulation and the staircase leading to the second floor received a new newel post and spindles.

Keeping the Character

Despite all the modernization, the home retains its pre-war charm due to Michelle's determination to save many of the original architectural features.

"Since it's a character house, I wanted to see lots of that vintage character and warmth," she says, pointing out the ornate cast-iron heating vents and floor grates found throughout the home. "They could have been removed but I think they're beautiful."

In some cases, retaining that timeless appeal helped Michelle save money. During one of her walk-throughs with Steve, she asked him to replace all the interior doors, unaware they were solid wood. Steve

recalls the conversation: "I didn't want her pulling fir doors out. Most of our guys are journeyman carpenters and for them to take a fir door out and replace it with an MDF door—it drives them nuts," he says with a laugh. "You're not going to get solid fir doors anymore, so we saved all that." Where possible, they also saved fir baseboards and trim. New windows were switched in throughout, but their intricate casings and trim were kept and refinished.

For the living room fireplace, Michelle had planned a tiled surround until the plaster was chipped away to reveal beautiful, original brickwork. Immediately, she switched gears. "I was like, 'there's no way I'm going to tile over this.' When you think of a character home, you want to see this old brick." She decided to paint it white to complement the living ➤

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— BY MICHELLE ROWLETT —

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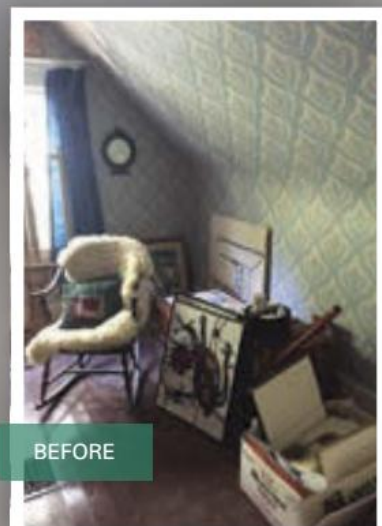


Michelle Rowlett - Owner

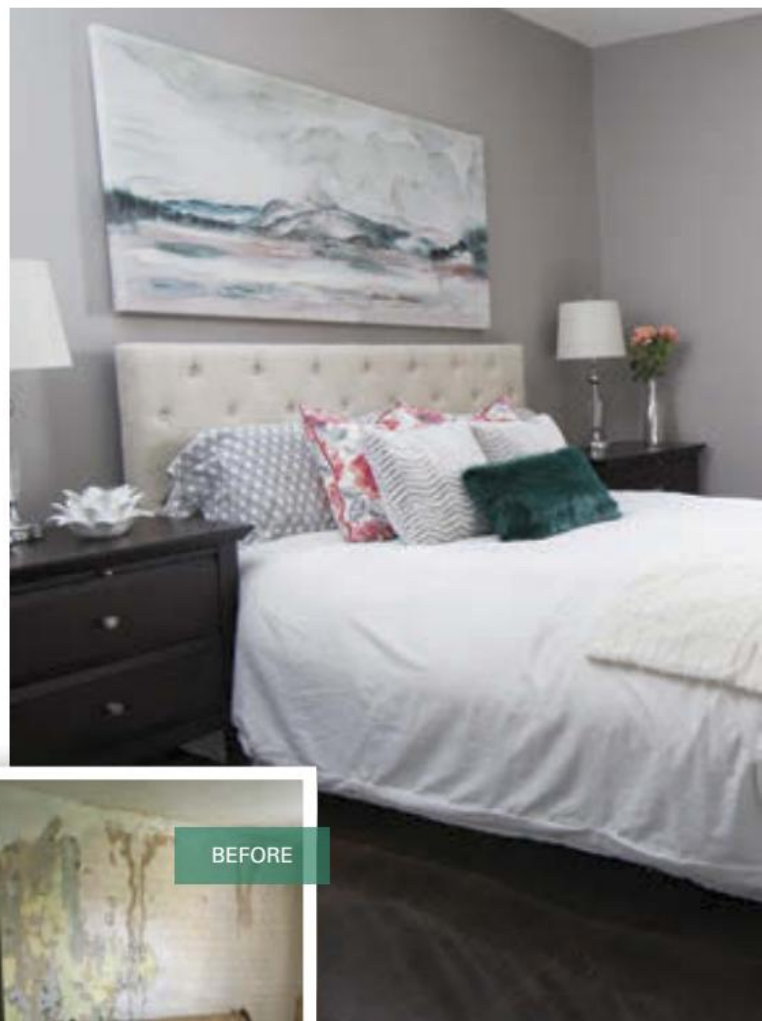
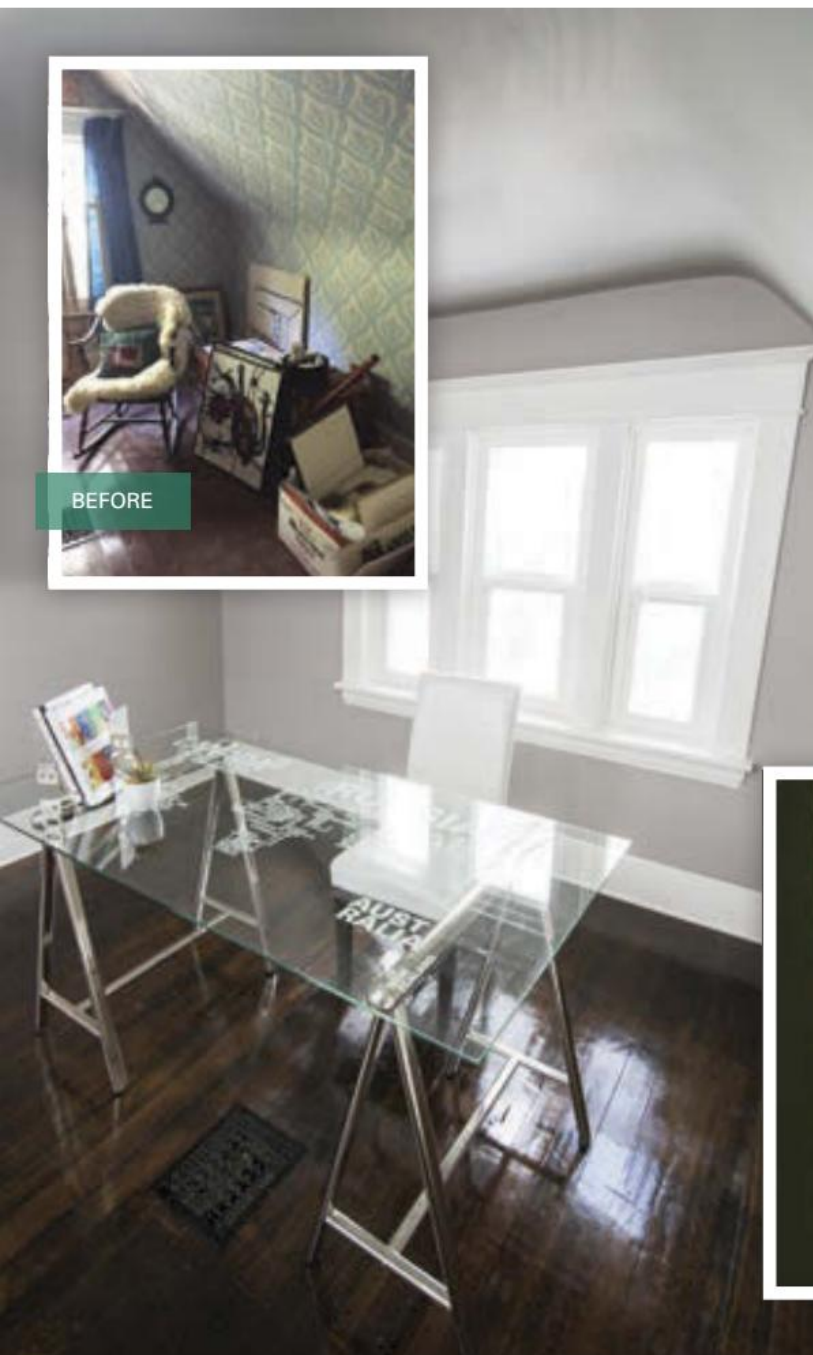
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room's cool, grey palate.

Upstairs, the ensuite featured an original clawfoot tub. "It wasn't a tub you would actually want to have a bubble bath in," Michelle laughs. But she saw a diamond in the rough. "I hired someone to come in and refinish it," she says. "I had my plumbers come in and they spent a full day putting it in. It was definitely an investment in itself."

Restoration Costs

In some cases, it can cost more to restore certain features instead of replacing them. Refinishing the tub and the window casings are two examples of this; labour costs are generally higher than the price of new—and sometimes lesser quality—materials.

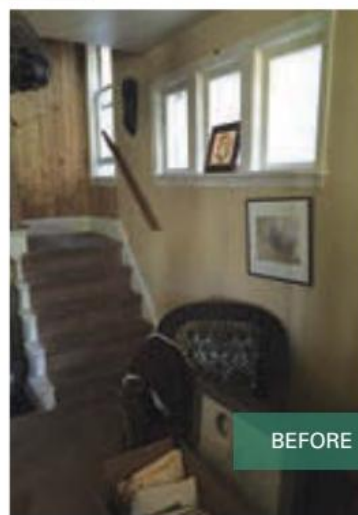
This was also the case with the home's exterior restoration, says Steve. "Outside, Michelle

Painted that house—every little nail hole, everything was filled and painted. She, quite frankly, could have put vinyl siding on cheaper, but she restored what was there. It's all beautiful cedar siding and you won't get better than that." He adds, "She was adamant about keeping the character of the house and I think she achieved it."

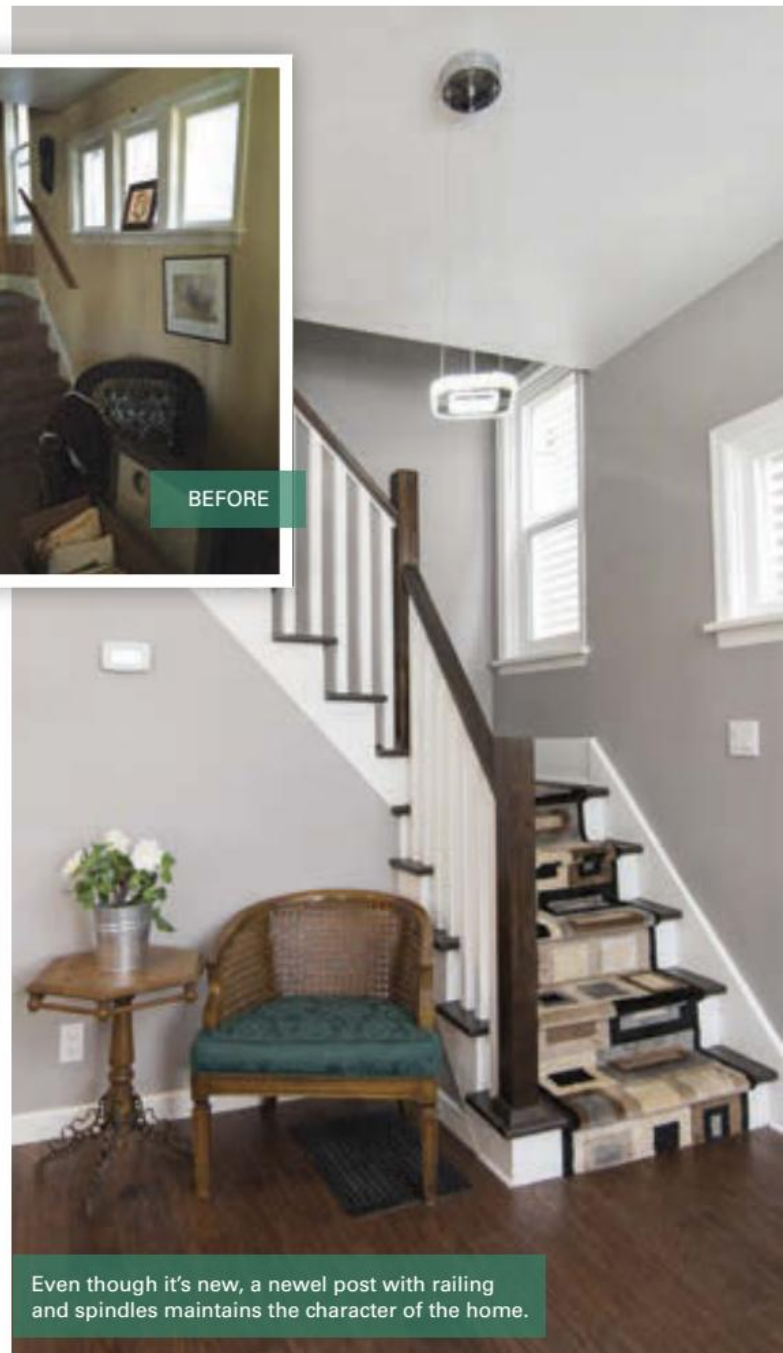
Staying on Budget

Michelle says staying on budget starts with a thorough understanding of the condition of a house before signing on the dotted line. "We knew things would be pretty bad, pretty dated," she says. "I had an inspector come through ahead of time so I knew the structure and foundation were really solid. That's why I chose to go ahead with this."

Although he doesn't want to dissuade others from restoring old homes, Steve stresses the importance of planning your budget for the worst "because that's usually what happens," he says. "Essentially, when you're into an old house like that, the best you can expect is to come away with the framing,



BEFORE



Even though it's new, a newel post with railing and spindles maintains the character of the home.

which is why those old homes are so expensive to renovate. I don't want to scare people away, but it's the truth of the matter. It's expensive and you need to plan for it."

A seamless blend of old and new, the home honours the past while embracing the

present. Steve would likely agree: "Michelle didn't refurbish. She restored, and my hat's off to her." (H)

Julie Barnes

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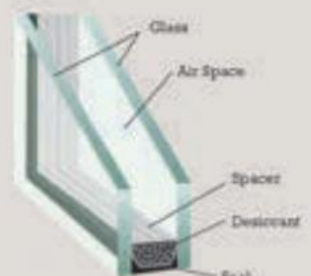
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ACCOMMODATING MOVING GROUND

A Reno Ready for Sinking Soil

Gerard and Jacquie Gardiner had a sinking feeling, even before they built their new house. But it was something they expected, given they were on 10 coveted acres in Corman Park, a beautiful natural setting—on a flood plain. That means anything built is likely

to sink a little, especially on a site just over 30 metres from the South Saskatchewan River.

To borrow from the country song, if the good Lord willin' and the creek don't rise, the couple was determined this peaceful site would be home no matter what.

Jacquie, with architectural technology experience, designed the open concept two-storey with a modest 936 sq. ft. footprint. Engineering firms were hired to oversee construction and test soil. Gerard, who has a mechanical engineering back-

ground, realized their design had distributed the weight with massive footings so that pressure per square inch was lighter than the footprint of a car. An above ground foundation was designed, with an eight-foot berm around the house. The Gardiners scoffed,



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KARIN MELBERG SCHWIER

but building codes required planning for Mother Nature's extreme floodwaters, an event that might occur once every 500 years.

Going with the Flow

Mother Nature visited sooner than expected. Five

years after building, the Gardiners experienced their first flood in 2005. Because everything had been built to code, the house on the hill stayed dry then—and again in 2011. The couple stopped pooh-poohing that once-in-500-years possibility. ➤

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The plumbing pipe buckled due to building settling prior to installation of inline ABS expansion joint fitting in the new bathroom partition wall.



The bathtub was on the stationary floor but could not be attached to a wall that might move. The solution was a freestanding 3/4" plywood enclosure independent of the outside wall.

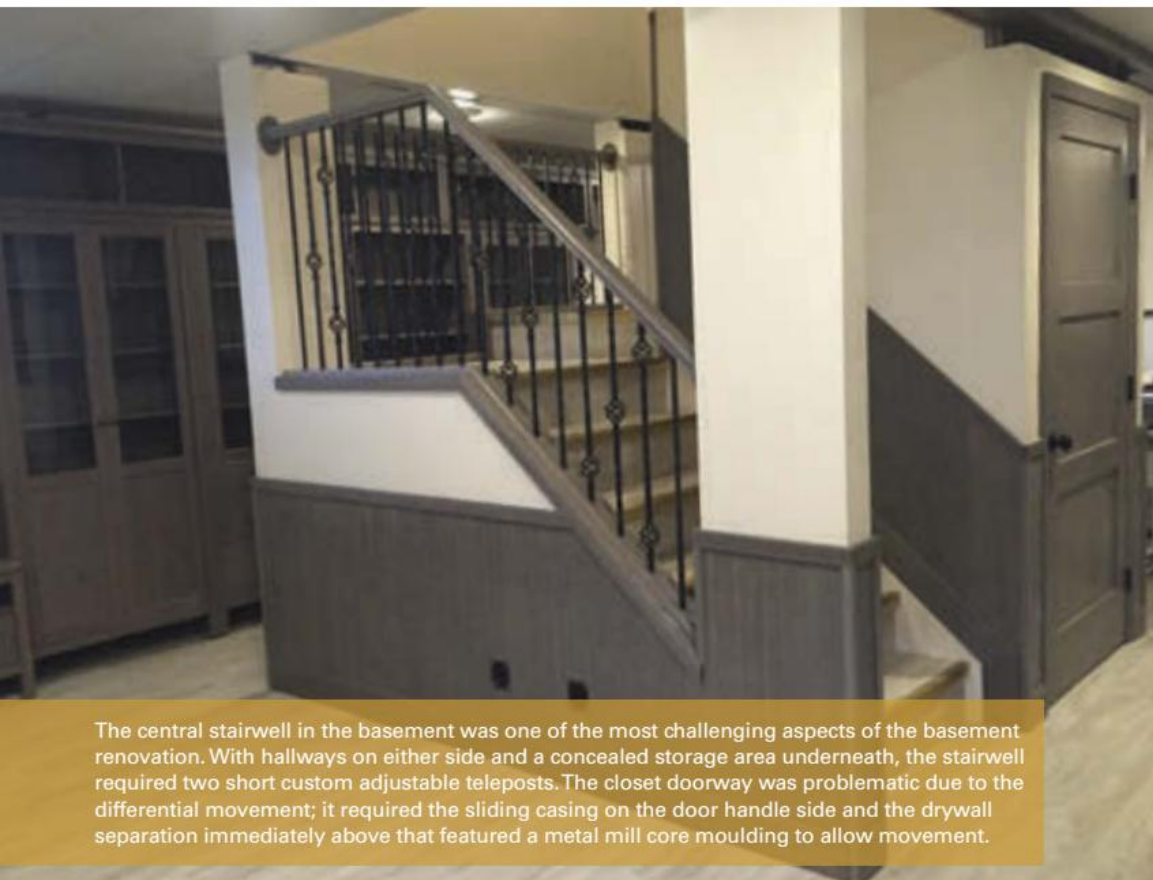


The next hard curveball wasn't technically from Mother Nature, but Man.

"The big one came in 2013 when they opened the Gardiner Dam spillway completely," says Gerard, no relation to the Gardiner for whom the dam was named. The Water Security Agency (WSA) decided to release water to make way for a

deluge from southern Alberta storms. People south of the Beaver Creek conservation area were given notice on a Friday at 3 p.m.

"We knew it would take maybe two days for the water to rise here," recalls Gerard. "But no one knew how high it would get because the spillway had never been opened 100 per cent before. We moved



The central stairwell in the basement was one of the most challenging aspects of the basement renovation. With hallways on either side and a concealed storage area underneath, the stairwell required two short custom adjustable teleposts. The closet doorway was problematic due to the differential movement; it required the sliding casing on the door handle side and the drywall separation immediately above that featured a metal mill core moulding to allow movement.



Photos: The Master's Finishing Touch

The central stairwell wall in the closet required mini-teleposts to adjust for movement.



The drop ceiling also had to accommodate this movement potential. A typical L-wall moulding on the outside walls and against the central I-beam was constructed, but builders used a suspended T-track against the other walls to accommodate movement.



equipment to high ground, kept the cats and dogs in and emptied the basement." By Sunday afternoon, the water had crested. Gerard, Jacquie and the dogs went by canoe to and from the road where cars were parked 900 metres from the house.

With each flood, the Gardiner house stayed dry, even though it—along

with several neighbouring homes—became literal islands in the flood.

Still Getting Settled

"Each time, the ground softened and brought new meaning to the phrase 'getting settled in,'" says Gerard. "We estimate the house has settled about seven or eight inches overall, but quite evenly."

Small drywall cracks and buckling on the upper floors, and doors out of alignment were more annoying than alarming. The above-ground basement floor also had one longitudinal crack. The entire weight of the house settled significantly on the outside wall footings. The central area of the home was supported by a 6x9 inch steel I-beam, in turn supported by two industrial square steel tele-posts on over-sized bearing pads. The beam was bowing, but Gerard fixed that with temporary support while he cut out ten inches from the tele-posts and re-welded, adding adjustable screws for future movement.

Basement Tailored for Movement

When the 2013 water receded and the land had dried out enough, the Gardiners decided to finish the basement since they had emptied it as a precaution. But any interior finishing had to be done to accommodate probable further sinking. Gerard worked with Delmer Hildebrandt, a skilled tradesman with Superior Cabinets, to design and fabricate moving outside basement wall stud framing with notched bottom edges so they could slide by one another allowing for two to three inches of future settling.

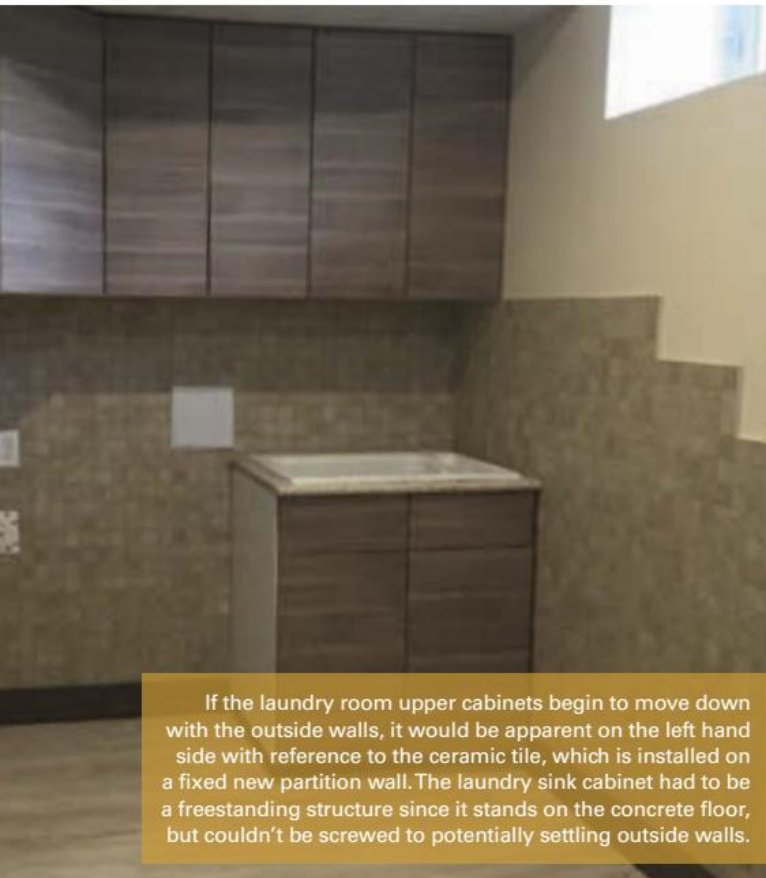
"Choosing only materials that could withstand water invasion, however unlikely, we started working with Del," says Gerard. But the real trick was to figure out how to finish the basement to accommodate movement.

"Since the perimeter foundation settles at a different rate than the basement floor, we designed a special wall system because the outside walls compress at a different rate than the inside or partition walls. We also placed the stairwell on four tele-posts to allow adjustments for future movement." Tragically, Del passed away, but his insight and contribution remains a valuable component in the Gardiner home.

Harvey Brown of HB Systems designed a low-cost, highly efficient retrofit radiant floor system.

"We tapped into the existing house hot water to warm the floor in the winter, and the cold well water to cool it in the summer," says Gerard. "Jacquie insisted on nine-foot high basement ceilings, and this foresight was very helpful in keeping a useful space even after the settling." That height allowed room to pour a new concrete slab over the old to embed the hydronic tubing and hide the crack. ➤

If the laundry room upper cabinets begin to move down with the outside walls, it would be apparent on the left hand side with reference to the ceramic tile, which is installed on a fixed new partition wall. The laundry sink cabinet had to be a freestanding structure since it stands on the concrete floor, but couldn't be screwed to potentially settling outside walls.





Custom tall pull-out storage cabinets at the end of the bathtub enclosure fully utilize all the available space.

A Creative Grasp of the Physics

The Gardiners enlisted the creative construction talents of David and Timothy Dombowsky, the tenacious father-son duo with The Master's Finishing Touch. The pair grasped the design realities in a house where sinking would be a constant probability.

"It was a great project to work on," says Tim. "On many drives out to the property, Dad and I really grappled with solutions to problems. It really challenged us to get better at what we do."

Creativity was the watchword for the basement development. The Gardiners didn't

want simply a utilitarian space; it also had to be a comfortable and pleasant living area with the engineering sight unseen.

"The basement development meant resolving potential future movement issues, making adjustments as we went along," says David. There were many design innovations, including cutting several drywall corner joints where the outside basement walls could potentially move down past the stationary interior walls. Plumbing pipes needed multiple expansion joints. Both interior and exterior basement framed walls had to allow for potential future movement. Removable custom

DAM COINCIDENCE!

The Gardiner Dam (no relation) isn't the only connection Gerard and Jacquie have with the name. Gerard's family lived at 241 Leopold Crescent in Regina from 1970–82. Designed by Storey and Van Egmond, the house was built in 1916 for banker John Menzies. Guess who lived there from 1919 to 1959? John Gardiner, brother of local farmer and educator James Garfield Gardiner, fourth premier of Saskatchewan, 1926–29 (who held the office a second time 1934–35), for whom the dam is named.

baseboards were taller to cover the initial two-inch gap, and fine gauge headless pins were used instead of nails or screws because they can adapt to movement, gradually pulling away until they entirely detach; the fix then is as simple as re-fastening with new 23 gauge pins.

What Goes Up...

"One particularly challenging area was that central stairwell," explains Gerard. "The centre partition wall moves at a different rate than the four adjustable corners so Dave and Tim devised a drywall slip joint and two additional customized short tele-posts."

A further construction challenge was a closet door directly located in this stairwell area. The hinge side and top of the door are stationary, but the latch strike side of the door-frame and casing needed to accommodate movement.

"Our solution was to nail the casing securely to the door jamb frame, but no nails were fastened on the opposite side of the casing into the drywall and 2x4 framing. These elements could then slide by one another," Timothy says.

But Why Build Here?

"I used to hate the autumn," says Gerard. "With swimming

pools closing, leaves falling, nights getting colder, it was a compounding reminder that Winter Is Coming. But almost 20 years ago, we were walking with friends on a sand bar on the South Saskatchewan River near Beaver Creek. A fantastic warm late September day. Wave after wave of Sandhill cranes and Canada geese flew in on the river in their oddly graceful manner. We looked around and we were hooked."

Despite all the extra engineering, the Gardiners are "fortunate to have worked with these skilled practical tradespeople who welcomed the challenge." And there's the knowledge that from now on, the settling will be minimal. It has diminished considerably, now only about one inch since the last flood. Necessary adjustments will be infrequent.

"It's especially satisfying that all these people helped us find a way to go with the flow and make this house work. Because of that, we appreciate what we have out here so much more. We know that whatever may come, we'll deal with it." (P)

Karin Melberg Schwier



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  CRAIG SILLIPHANT

HOME FOOD:

The Pulse of Saskatchewan

People laugh when they hear I'm heading to my wife's family farm; they know me as a city guy and the image of me 'down on the farm' is funny to them for some reason. And yet, I find myself standing knee deep in lentils (and wild mustard weed) with my wife's uncle, Ian Cushon, owner of Moose Creek Organic Farm.

Uncle Ian is the third generation owner of Moose Creek, situated near Oxbow,

Saskatchewan. It started when his grandfather came from England and worked for other farms until he had the opportunity to buy three quarters of a section. When the time came, Ian's father Frank added some quarters and farmed that land until his own retirement in the 70s, when the land was passed onto his sons. Frank, who is still sharper than all of us at 98-years-young, can still be seen puttering around the farm.

While I may be a city boy at heart, one can't grow up in Saskatchewan and not be in awe of our farmers or have pride in our agricultural contribution to the world. In fact, the United Nations has declared 2016 *The International Year of Pulses*, which is why Uncle Ian is showing me their lentils.

"There's a good market for them," says Ian. "I can sell as many lentils as I can grow."

Depending on your knowl-

edge of Saskatchewan agriculture, you may or may not be surprised to learn that as of 2015, Canada is the world's largest exporter of pulses, and most of most of them are from Saskatchewan.

Saskatchewan grows 99% of Canada's chickpeas, 96% of the lentils and 60% of Canada's dry peas. Pretty impressive.

So What is a Pulse Crop?

The word 'pulse' comes from

OCTOBER IS SASKATCHEWAN'S AGRICULTURE MONTH

Farm & Food Care Saskatchewan helped Saskatoon HOME put together a few facts to make you proud of our farming province, and acknowledge October as Saskatchewan's Agriculture month.

- In 1931, one in three Canadians lived on a farm. Today it's only one in 50.
- Farming is still a family business: over 97 per cent of farms in Canada are family owned.
- According to census figures, SK has almost 37,000 farms and the three most popular types of farms are grain farms, oilseed farms and beef ranches.
- Canola was developed in the 1970s by Canadian plant scientists and is now the cooking oil of choice for millions around the world. Approximately half of Canada's canola is grown in SK.
- SK is one of the world's largest mustard exporters—SK is responsible for almost half of all the mustard traded in the world.
- SK farmers produce about 2.26 million kilograms of fruit per year, from apples and rhubarb to Saskatoon berries and sour cherries.
- Canada is the largest producer of flaxseed in the world, representing about one-third of world production. SK (on average) produces about 80% of all the flax in Canada.
- Flax is amazingly versatile. The seeds are used in baking and cooking; oil from the seeds can be used in cooking, too, but it is also used to make things like linoleum flooring and paint. The fibre



Publisher Amanda Soulodre drives the grain truck on her family farm by Alvena, Saskatchewan.

from the stems of flax plants is used to make linen fabric as well as many other fibre products, like insulation, plastics and paper.

- SK is the second-largest beef-producing province (after Alberta) and approximately 18,000 producers raise beef cattle in SK.
- No pigs, chickens, turkeys or egg-laying hens in Canada are fed hormones. That's been illegal for decades. And they're not used in milk production either.
- Saskatchewan has 158 dairy farms, with an average of 170 cows per farm. More than 2,500 people work on dairy farms in Saskatchewan. When you add in milk processing, there are more than 4,500 people who work in dairy.
- Saskatchewan farms produce over 700,000 litres of milk every day.

the Latin word 'puls,' which means a thick soup. Pulses are the edible seeds from plants in the legume family. But don't confuse them with a legume, which refers to plants whose

fruit is enclosed in a pod—the term pulse refers only to the dried seed. Dried peas, edible beans, lentils and chickpeas are the most common types of pulses. They're high in protein

and fibre, but low in fat. They also have added benefits in terms of the environmental sustainability of annual cropping systems.

"One of the most important

things about lentils," explains Ian, "is that they fix their own nitrogen from the air. So we don't need to provide nitrogen fertilizer. Legumes are a really important part of all ➤

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We enjoyed tackling the challenges of the featured Gardiner basement development. Let's work together to build your dream!

farming systems, but really important on organic farms. They have nitrogen-fixing bacteria attached to the roots that convert the nitrogen in the air to nitrogen for the plant. And that's what provides the protein, why the seed is rich in protein."

These crops enjoy the prairie's short growing season and its dry, fast-draining soil. Ian points out that while it makes sense for him to grow lentils, South East Saskatchewan, where Oxbow is located, isn't really the prime area to grow them.

"The best areas are west and in the dryer regions," he says. "It's more adapted to dryer, warmer conditions."

I try to get his assessment of how the lentil crop will turn out

this year, which he is reluctant to do. I get it; farmers don't like to count their chickens before they hatch (see, I can use farm lingo!).

"You sure don't [count those chickens before they hatch]," he laughs. "Overall our crops are good."

Looking Forward

We can't say where Saskatchewan farms will go, especially when their success is tied to uncontrollable elements like weather or the world market. But we can say that farms have come a long way in the last 50 years, and even Ian has seen vast changes in his 35 years working the land.

"Since I started farming, a big diversification has happened with a lot of crops.

Lentils were one of the major new developments since the early '80s when I started farming. Lentils became very important to a lot of producers. Peas as well. Farmers have also gone to less tillage and more direct seeding if they're not organic. Typically, organic farmers use a lot more tillage and longer rotations to deal with weeds. And generally, the technology has changed quite a bit."

It is important to note that conventionally farmed lentil acres make up the majority of Saskatchewan's lentil crop. Because of favourable market prices and increased demand from overseas, in 2016 there was a 48% increase in the number of acres seeded. That's 5.84 million acres of lentils in

Western Canada, 5.3 million of which are in Saskatchewan.

In terms of the Cushon farm, I can't help but feel some kinship to the land that gave rise to my wife's family, and the sustenance that this farm and many others provide for the world. And if someone wants to laugh at me because I got my nice city-slicker sneakers all muddy, well, that's their prerogative.

"The next generation, my son and daughter, at least my son Liam, is interested in farming," says Uncle Ian when I ask about the future of Moose Creek Organic Farm. "Hopefully he'll continue on with it, and there'll be another generation after that." (I)

Craig Silliphant

ROASTED CAULIFLOWER AND SEASONED LENTIL TACOS

Makes 8 tacos, Serves 4

Cauliflower

1 large head of cauliflower, sliced into bite-sized florets
3 tbsp olive oil
salt & pepper

Lentils

1 tbsp olive oil
1 cup yellow or white onion, chopped
2 large garlic cloves, pressed or minced

2 tbsp tomato paste
1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
1/2 teaspoon chili powder
3/4 cups brown lentils, picked over for debris and rinsed

2 cups vegetable broth or water

Chipotle sauce

1/3 cup mayonnaise
2 tbsp lime juice

3 tbsp adobo sauce (from a can of chipotle peppers) or chipotle hot sauce to taste
salt & pepper

Everything else

8 small, round corn tortillas
1/2 cup packed fresh cilantro leaves (cilantro haters, substitute some fresh spring greens instead)



Photo: Kate Taylor of Cookie + Kate blog, courtesy of USA Dry Pea and Lentil Council

To roast the cauliflower: Preheat oven to 425°F. Toss cauliflower florets with enough olive oil to cover them in a light, even layer of oil. Season with salt and pepper and arrange the florets in a single layer on a large, rimmed baking sheet. Roast for 30 to 35 minutes, tossing halfway, until the florets are deeply golden on the edges.

Warm the olive oil in a medium-sized pot over medium heat. Sauté the onion and garlic with a dash of salt for about 5 minutes, until the onions are softened and turning translucent. Add the tomato paste, cumin and chili powder and sauté for another minute, stirring constantly. Add the lentils and the vegetable broth or water. Raise heat and bring the mixture to a gentle simmer. Cook, uncovered, for 20 minutes to 35

minutes, until the lentils are tender and cooked through. Reduce heat as necessary to maintain a gentle simmer.

To prepare the chipotle sauce, whisk together the ingredients and set aside (if you have no choice but to use whole chipotle peppers from the can, use a blender to purée it all). Once the lentils are done cooking, drain off any excess liquid, then cover and set aside. Warm tortillas individually in a pan over medium heat. Stack the warm tortillas and cover them with a tea towel if you won't be serving the tacos immediately.

Once all of your components are ready, you can assemble your tacos! Top each tortilla with the lentil mixture, cauliflower, a drizzle of chipotle sauce and a generous sprinkle of chopped cilantro.

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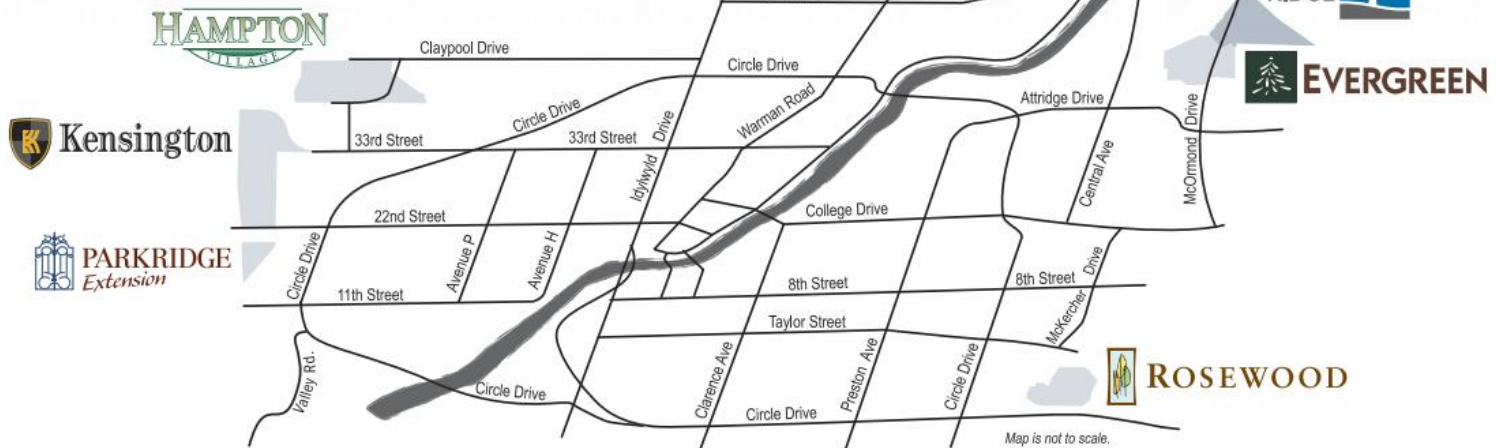
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HOMEtown Reflections

 JEFF O'BRIEN

EVOLUTION OF THE FLOOR PLAN



Sackville family front room, 112 Ave H South, ca. 1912.

Photo: Local History Room – Saskatoon Public Library – PH-2003-13-4

When a couple we knew converted the main floor of their home into a giant, open-plan, kitchen-living room-dining room, little did they realize they were recreating a style of interior design that harkens back to the beginning of human history.

For thousands of years, people have crammed every indoor activity into the same one or two rooms. Even the livestock, when the weather was bad. Beds got put wherever there was space, and things like movable screens and curtains afforded what little privacy existed. The one-room house was the dominant style of dwelling in Canada until the mid-1800s, and as late as 1911, half the houses in Saskatchewan were one-room shacks and sod huts, built as temporary homes by homesteaders pouring in during the first years of the 20th century.

Front parlour of the James Clinkskill House at 152 Spadina Crescent in 1911.



Photo: Local History Room – Saskatoon Public Library – LH-2926017

For thousands of years, people have crammed every indoor activity into the same one or two rooms. Even the livestock, when the weather was bad.

Generally, however, houses in Canada grew in size through the 19th century, and as they did, the trend was to partition the interiors into smaller, enclosed spaces. We see ➤

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Ornate Saskatoon living room, ca. 1940s.



Photo: Local History Room – Saskatoon Public Library – A-750

"Open plan" living and dining room in a new house in the Adelaide/Churchill area, 1960.

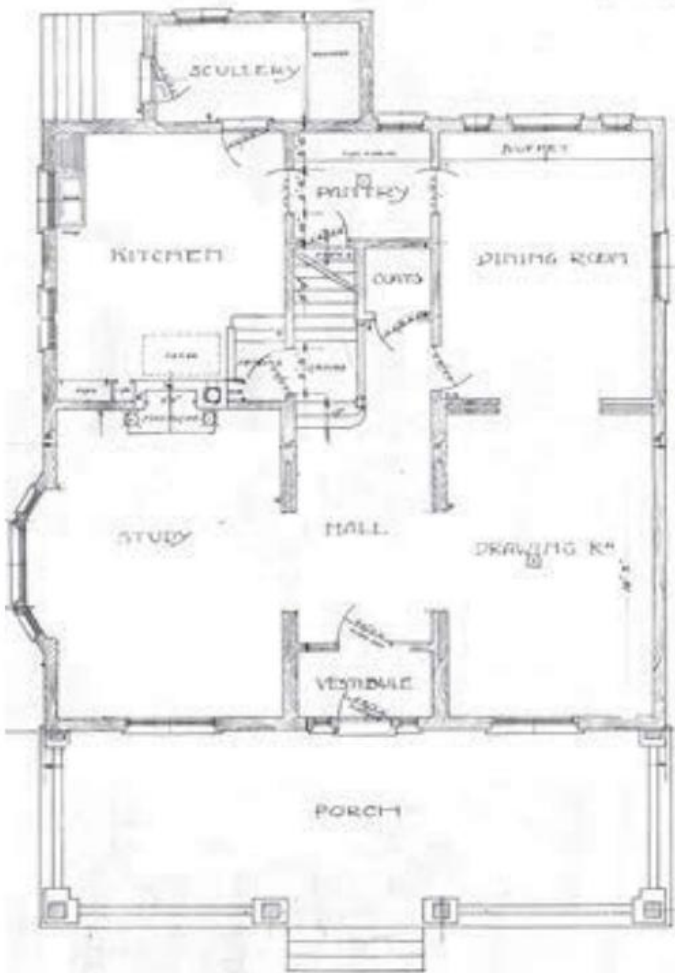


Photo: Local History Room – Saskatoon Public Library – B-14784

Living room in Montrose Court Apartments, ca. 1930s.



Photo: Local History Room – Saskatoon Public Library – A-752



Main floor plan of a grand family home in Saskatoon ca. 1911.

Photo: City of Saskatoon Archives

this in the Victorian image of the grand home with its various morning rooms, drawing rooms, libraries and the like. Most people didn't live in houses like that, of course. But the pattern was repeated in the homes of both the wealthy and the working class, and what most houses of any size shared was the idea of the front parlour.

While similar to modern-day idea living room, the parlour is by definition a formal space, and while it may have served for mundane matters, it was primarily the place where visitors were greeted and public functions held. Consequently, it was there that the family put its best face forward, with the nicest furniture, the most

expensive artwork and that quintessential status symbol of the 19th and early 20th century middle-class, the family piano.

Heat Not Want Not

When each room must be heated separately with a fire-place or stove and when the only light sources are candles and oil lamps, it is only natural that we would light and heat only the room being used, and take pains to separate it from the other, unheated rooms. Consequently, rooms were closed off from one another, and people tended to cluster in one space to socialize, read or work, retreating to their bedrooms only when it was time to sleep. ➤



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Victorian front room in Saskatoon, 1910.



Photo: Local History Room – Saskatoon Public Library – LH-3710

The development of efficient central heating and electrical systems changed all that. We no longer had to huddle

around a single kerosene lamp close to the fireplace, or in the kitchen with its big, coal- or wood-burning range.

THE DEATH ROOM

One use for the family parlour which people living in Saskatoon today might find a little surprising was as a place to lay out the recently deceased prior to burial. Nowadays, we turn this responsibility over to the funeral parlour. But this is a relatively new development even here, and it would have been very common for the front parlour—that most public of private spaces—to have played host to this most public of private occasions.

A number of online sources also claimed that as a consequence, the parlour was known as the “death room,” and was only renamed the living room at the urging of the *Ladies Home Journal* (in either 1910 or 1918; there was some disagreement on the part of our sources). Since the term “living room” goes back to at least the mid-19th century, this may seem unlikely.

We did, however, discover that it was not unknown for grander Victorian homes to have a second door leading straight into the parlour. This would have been for the convenience of guests, but would also have been quite handy for moving coffins in and out, whenever necessary. One might be tempted to conclude that this must be where the saying “at death’s door” comes from, were it not for the fact that the phrase goes back to at least the 1500s.

Sackville family formal dining room, 112 Ave H South, ca. 1915.



Photo: Local History Room – Saskatoon Public Library – PH-2003-13-5

Nor did we have to physically separate different rooms in order to keep the heat in. Since the early 1900s, and especially since the end of the Second World War, the tendency in North America has been for rooms to flow together, with symbolic partitions such as archways, or (as in the case of our friends) with everything occupying different parts of one big room.

Enter the TV

One result is that the formal parlour has been replaced by the far more casual modern living room. But you can put some of the blame for that on radio and TV, too. Even as modern heating and lighting meant family members were free to go off and do their own thing, the invention of radio and television helped bring them together. Except now we were congregating in front of our TV’s instead of around the stove, and from that it was a small step to inviting our guests there with us. Canadian society was also becoming demonstrably less formal, and so the idea of having a separate room to greet visi-

tors must have seemed like a terrible waste of space.

Today, things are changing again. Television long ago made its way into our bedrooms. Whether this will in turn affect how we entertain our guests is up for debate. But the proliferation of mobile devices means we can access any entertainment we want from anywhere we choose, and so people are moving into their own spaces and closing the doors behind them. As houses grow, and family sizes shrink, most of us now have enough room for everyone to finally have their own, completely private space, fully-furnished with all the amenities of modern life.

Eventually, this new reality will be reflected in how we design our homes. But home-buyers are a conservative lot, and new ideas trickle slowly into the general population. The housing inventory itself changes very gradually, with newer and older-style homes existing side-by-side for decades. Geography and economic conditions are also factors.

Although electricity came to Saskatoon in 1907 and natural

Basement "rumpus room" in 1977.



Photo: Local History Room – Saskatoon Public Library – CP-7506-2

A modern family living and dining room, 1977.



Photo: Local History Room – Saskatoon Public Library – CP-7506-3

gas in 1953, the vast majority of Saskatchewan farms weren't electrified until the 1950s and '60s, and you don't have to be particularly old in this province to have lived in a house that was heated by a

central stove. Moreover, the fact that you've finally installed a furnace doesn't mean you're suddenly going to knock down all your interior walls, either!

Ultimately, a house is just a box with people in it, and just

as with people, every broad categorization has room for endless variety. In the end, how we organize and use our living spaces will vary according to our personalities and needs, our tastes and

cultural expectations, climate, geography and the state of our pocketbooks. (H)

Jeff O'Brien

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Night in Canada in this unique home, with a 650 sq. ft. hockey rink, complete with change room, latching rink door and a luxury VIP executive viewing box. In the basement.

The Analytics

Rick Groeneveld, director of construction with Arbutus

Properties, said the idea for the basement rink grew out of studying lottery home behaviour when they built this home for the Kinsmen Home Lottery. What might set this lottery home apart? Reinforce Arbutus’ belief in building an area centred around community? What could be more

Saskatchewan than hockey? And what’s never been done before? An indoor hockey rink idea emerged from a ‘let’s think outside the (penalty) box’ brainstorming session. The home is 3,927 sq. ft. of west coast style, but it’s the rink that tips its hat to the beloved sport of hometown

*Oh! The good old hockey game,
Is the best game you can name;
And the best game you can name,
Is the good old hockey game!*

— Stompin' Tom Connors



Parents can watch the action from the VIP lounge. Here Nicholas and Sebastian square off.

heroes like Gordie Howe.

"We designed the whole home to be family-oriented. Different areas lend themselves to having the whole family spend time together," he explains. "So the whole lower level focuses on hockey, and entertaining friends and family. The rink by itself would

be cool, but it wouldn't be such an inviting area."

The executive box, bar fridge, viewing area, the change room (with skate blade friendly flooring made of recycled seat belts) and the bathroom make it more attractive.

"The neighbourhood kids come over with their ➤

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The VIP lounge is a great place to watch the action, entertain, and kick back during games. Hockey buds Sebastian, Tyson and Nicholas catch up on the stats.



"As a hockey player, and a big fan of the greatest sport ever, when I saw this awesome indoor hockey rink, I was truly amazed. Cool is the first word that pops into my head. Not only could I practice my skills during the off-season, but I could play shiny with my buddies—inside the house! Talk about awesome!" – Liam McRorie-Wilson, 14, Marion Graham (not shown).



This fully equipped change room even has skate blade friendly flooring made of recycled seat belts.



This rink is complete with goal lights ready for action.

parents," says Rick. "The adults can visit and watch the kids have a skate, and the adults can get out there, too!" That would be when the kids take over control of the goal light button.

The 'Ice' Surface

The synthetic ice is a Canadian product made in Ontario, and there are currently no manufacturers in western Canada. Skate blades will make their mark, but a simple sweep

of any tiny bits and a damp mop will clean up the 15 ft. wide by 36 ft. long synthetic surface. After seven to 10 years, the four by four snap-together squares that make up the ice surface can literally be flipped over to start a new lifespan.

"It's a fairly small market," says Rick. "Some people will put a linear sheet for shot practice. It's 15 per cent more resistant than real ice, so I'm not so sure how it would work for curling. There are ➤




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special plastic pucks you can use. Regular pucks work, too, but there might be an issue with those big boomers and the basement windows. Overhead lights are caged, and a homeowner may decide to screen the large windows if tips and stray rebounds are likely. And the MDF boards will start to show some wear but that will just look more authentic."

Rick says the cost of this basement development is about equal to putting in a bedroom or two with carpet.

Still a Multi-Use Space

Rick admits the basement hockey rink appeals to a certain demographic. Kids love it. A lot of parents love it. But it still is an area that can be used in other ways.

"Although it's devoted to hockey, it really is multipurpose," Rick says. "You can take the hockey out of it and change it into a rumpus room or extra bedroom. When you want the full ice surface, roll up the carpet and it's ready to go again for the next game."

Go, Local, Go

Rick approached Steve Hogel, president of the Saskatoon Blades, and management was intrigued. They toured the home and checked out the VIP box and the rink. Originally, there had been talk about featuring an NHL team but the question of which one (Rick favours the Canucks) almost led to people getting jersied in the meeting. The sportsmanlike choice was to pay homage to a local team.

"The Blades donated jerseys and helmets for the change room," says Rick. "We put the Blades logo on the boards along with other partners to give it a more authentic feel." ➤

The lounge is a comfortable place to relax and entertain.





On this indoor rink, there's plenty of room for a breakout.

Can't Replace the Outdoor Factor

Saskatchewan is hockey. That's why the Arbutus team featured a rink to set them apart from other home lotteries. Will it replace the glorious tradition of the community hockey rink or the street shinny at -30 where kids learn to tough it out despite frostbitten cheeks and fingers? Will little kids choose to lace up for a trip to the basement instead of heading out to the arena? Braving the cold is

part of our collective hockey tradition.

But for the sheer novelty, fun and the extra opportunity to work on crossovers, toe-drag, saucer passes, stickhandling and the old slapshot all year round, this idea scores. 

Karin Melberg Schwier

The author thanks Liam McRorie-Wilson, assistant captain/centre with the Saskatoon Renegades for his technical expertise.

CHECKING THE STATS

- The ice is acrylic, snap-together 4'x4' squares.
- It's sounds like real ice; every start, stride and stop sounds authentic.
- You don't need a Zamboni. Instead, clean ups are a quick sweep and once-over with a mop and plain water.
- The boards are 48" high and the overhead lights are caged in case of flying pucks.
- The luxury executive box features a bar fridge, cabinets, TV, barstools and viewing area, and the Big Goal Light Button of Power.
- No penalty box; everyone is expected to behave.



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